

40 Years of Improving Intelligence**The President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board**

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Many Intelligence Community (IC) professionals evidently are unfamiliar with the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB) and its role and mission in shaping US intelligence. But this small and somewhat inconspicuous board, with its direct access to the President, has a long and illustrious history of molding, guiding, and, in particular, improving US foreign intelligence activities. (b)(3)(n)

The PFIAB's Mandate

The PFIAB's primary mission is to advise the President on the performance of US intelligence and to make recommendations regarding how intelligence activities can be improved. Specifically, the current Executive Order (EO) establishing the PFIAB directs it to "assess the quality, quantity, and adequacy of intelligence collection, of analysis and estimates, and of counterintelligence and other intelligence activities."¹ Toward this end, the PFIAB is authorized to review "the performance of all agencies of the Federal Government that are engaged in the collection, evaluation, or production of intelligence or the execution of intelligence policy" as well as "the adequacy of management, personnel, and organizations in the intelligence agencies."² (b)(3)(n)

Although the current EO differs slightly from previous ones, this essentially is the historical mission of the PFIAB. From its formation in 1956, the PFIAB has been charged principally with enhancing "the secu-

rity of the United States and the conduct of its foreign affairs by furthering the availability of intelligence of the highest order."³ A nonpartisan board of experts from outside the government, constituted within the Executive Office of the President⁴ and answering directly to the President himself, the PFIAB has been able to maintain its position as an independent and unbiased expert voice on matters relating to the conduct, organization, and management of intelligence activities. (b)(3)(n)

Contrary to many commentators' claims, before the current EO, the PFIAB never had a "watchdog" role of monitoring and overseeing the IC for illegal or questionable activities. Rather, the PFIAB's focus has always primarily been the improvement of intelligence activities. Even under the current EO, which established the Intelligence Oversight Board (IOB) as a standing committee of the PFIAB, the IOB and the PFIAB operate largely as separate entities, with PFIAB maintaining its traditional focus on identifying deficiencies and recommending improvements in intelligence activities. (b)(3)(n)

The Board's Composition

Under the current EO, the PFIAB is composed of no more than 16 members, including the chair and vice chair. The PFIAB's size has varied somewhat during its 40-year history, ranging from five members during the Bush administration to 22 members during the Reagan

Advisory Board

PFIAB Chairs

Dr. James R. Killian, Jr.	1956-63
Clark H. Clifford	1963-68
Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, USA (Ret.)	1968-70
Adm. George W. Anderson, Jr., USN (Ret.)	1970-76
Leo Cherne	1976-77
Ambassador Anne Armstrong	1982-90
The Honorable John G. Tower	1990-91
Adm. Bobby Inman, USN (Ret.) (Acting)	1991-93
Adm. William J. Crowe, Jr., USN (Ret.)	1993-94
The Honorable Les Aspin	1994-95
The Honorable Warren Rudman (Acting)	1995-96
The Honorable Thomas S. Foley	1996-Present

administration. Throughout its existence, however, the Board has remained a small body. President Clinton's PFIAB originally consisted of 12 members, although he appointed four additional members in early 1996 to reach the current 16-person Board. (b)(3)(n)

By EO, the PFIAB members are to be "trustworthy and distinguished citizens outside the government who are qualified on the basis of achievement, experience, and independence."⁵ Generally, the members are a diverse mix of prominent business executives, academics, lawyers, former diplomats and government officials, and retired military officers. As has been the practice during most of PFIAB's history, members, including the chair and vice chair, are not paid for their services, receiving only transporta-

tion expenses and per diem during PFIAB meetings.⁶ (b)(3)(n)

The Board convenes in regular session for two days every other month. The entire Board or subsets of the membership also meet periodically as required for Board business. To support the Board's work, particularly during periods between regular Board meetings, the PFIAB has a full-time staff. The staff historically has been a varied mix of political appointees, active-duty military, and civil servants from the IC and the Department of Defense. Currently, the acting executive director of the staff is seconded from CIA, one assistant director is seconded from the National Reconnaissance Office, and the other assistant director (who is also Counsel to the IOB) is on loan from the US Army. There also is a special assistant, an administrative

officer, and an administrative assistant on the staff. (b)(3)(n)

Reports to the President

The principal mechanism that the PFIAB uses to execute its mission is through aperiodic reports to the President. Under EO, the PFIAB has to report to the President no less than semiannually; historically, the reports have been much more frequent.⁷ These reports to the President fall into three broad categories:

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The President periodically designates topics for PFIAB study as he sees issues arise. The frequency of such Presidentially directed studies has varied over time, although some of the PFIAB's most important and influential reports were prepared at Presidential direction. Alternately, the PFIAB's members may independently elect to conduct reviews and prepare reports on issues that they believe are important. The Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) and other intelligence agency heads also may identify issues for the PFIAB

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Throughout its history, the PFIAB has maintained an enviable record for protecting and preventing unauthorized disclosure of classified information provided to the Board.

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and request that the Board prepare reports on those issues; the Board has the discretion to decide whether it conducts reviews on issues suggested by the Community. (b)(3)(n)

In preparing a report to the President, the PFIAB members and staff conduct dozens—sometimes even hundreds—of interviews with key officials among both intelligence consumers and intelligence producers. Among consumers, the PFIAB frequently interviews members of the National Security Council staff, officials of the Departments of State and Defense, military officers, and officials of other Cabinet departments. The PFIAB, moreover, also interacts with the entire IC, not only senior intelligence officials, but also with individual analysts and case officers, program managers and engineers for technical systems, and midlevel managers; and PFIAB members and staff frequently pay personal visits to intelligence facilities. (b)(3)(n)

The PFIAB's reviews have frequently included in-depth evaluations of programs, technologies, and systems, drawing on the deep and varied expertise of the Board members. By EO, Federal departments and agencies are required to "provide the PFIAB with access to all information that the PFIAB deems necessary to carry out its responsibilities."⁸ The PFIAB, in turn, is required to afford all necessary protection to that information, and the Board maintains secure spaces for discussions and storage. Throughout its history, the PFIAB has maintained an enviable record for protecting and preventing unauthorized disclosure of classified information provided to the Board. (b)(3)(n)

The information obtained during these interviews and reviews is then analyzed, and the Board prepares a report detailing its findings and making specific recommendations for any changes or improvements. The reports are sent directly to the President, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and the Senior Director of the National Security Council for Intelligence Programs. Formal submission of a report has often been followed by meetings between the PFIAB members and the President or the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. After the White House has completed its review of the report, and, with the President's permission, reports are also usually provided to the DCI and any other involved intelligence or executive branch official. (b)(3)(n)

Frequently, the PFIAB examines more discrete issues not warranting a formal report to the President. In these cases, the PFIAB's findings and recommendations are often communicated to the President through a letter. The PFIAB is also authorized by EO to advise and make recommendations directly to the DCI and all Federal agencies involved in intelligence activities, and the Board has often used this mechanism to work with the IC on issues not requiring direct Presidential involvement. (b)(3)(n)

Eisenhower to Ford

On 8 February 1956, President Eisenhower created the President's Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities—the predecessor to today's PFIAB—"to enhance the security of the United States and the conduct of its foreign affairs by furthering the availability of intelligence of the highest order."⁹ The Board was established based in large part on the recommendations of the second Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government (the "second Hoover Commission"), which had recommended that the President appoint a committee of private citizens to examine and report on US foreign intelligence activities.¹⁰ The Eisenhower Board's first chairman was Dr. James R. Killian, Jr., of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the namesake of the annual PFIAB Killian Award.¹¹ (b)(3)(n)

One of the Eisenhower Board's most important accomplishments was the pivotal role that the Board played in the establishment of the United States Intelligence Board (USIB), the forerunner to the current National Foreign Intelligence Board (NFIB). The Board pushed for the USIB to better integrate the IC and to coordinate the allocation of resources throughout the Community. The Eisenhower Board also played a role

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Although President Kennedy immediately recognized the need for a board like the PFIAB, he did not

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President Carter is the only President since 1956 who elected not to use an advisory group like the PFIAB on intelligence matters.

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immediately name a successor to the Eisenhower Board following his inauguration. But, in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs operation, President Kennedy issued a new EO creating the PFIAB as a replacement for the Eisenhower Board of Consultants, retaining essentially the same mission as the previous board.¹² Recommendations of the Kennedy Board led to

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an area of longstanding PFIAB activism. (b)(3)(n)

Following Kennedy's assassination, President Johnson retained the Kennedy PFIAB, and he issued two letters expressing his desire that the Board continue under the Kennedy EO.¹³ The Johnson Board's most notable accomplishment was

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President Nixon issued a new EO regarding the Board on assuming office, but again made few changes in its role and mission.¹⁴ Later, President Nixon also tasked the PFIAB

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analysis exercise for NIE 11-3/8. This exercise not only had a profound and lasting effect on NIEs and subsequent US defense spending, but it also has recently been resurrected as a model for resolving the ongoing disputes over the NIE on the ballistic missile threat to the United States.

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In part as a result of the Church and Pike hearings and the ensuing revelations, the Ford Board also studied

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President Ford initially retained Nixon's Board upon assuming office, but later he expanded the Board from 10 to 17 members. President Ford said he saw the expansion as necessary because of the increasing complexity of intelligence activities and the diversity of new security challenges facing the United States.¹⁷

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The Ford Board's most notable contribution to US intelligence was its central role in the famous "A Team-B Team" competitive analysis exercise. Through its reviews, the PFIAB had concluded that IC National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs) were underestimating the progress of Soviet strategic weapons programs. As a result, then PFIAB Chairman Adm. George Anderson wrote President Ford proposing a "competitive analysis" of the intelligence data. The proposal was opposed by DCI William Colby, but Colby eventually agreed to a PFIAB proposal for a CIA review of the track record of NIEs. That review so clearly documented the failings of Soviet strategic NIEs that, in April 1976, DCI George Bush (who succeeded Colby) agreed to the competitive

President Carter is the only President since 1956 who elected not to use an advisory group like the PFIAB on intelligence matters. Following his election, he decided the Board was unnecessary, stating that the National Security Council, the IC, the newly formed Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and the then-planned House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence "can now [sic] effectively review and assess foreign intelligence activities." As a result, in May 1977, he issued an EO abolishing the PFIAB.¹⁸

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The Reagan Years

Following the election of President Reagan in 1980, numerous voices, both within the administration and

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One of the PFIAB's most important studies . . . was an independent assessment of the Soviet "war scare" of the late 1970s and early 1980s . . .

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outside the government—including the Association of Former Intelligence Officers—argued for the reestablishment of the PFIAB.¹⁹ President Reagan responded by issuing a new EO in October 1981 resurrecting the PFIAB. Like previous Presidents, in reestablishing the Board, President Reagan emphasized that the PFIAB's mission was part of his “commitment to revitalize and strengthen our intelligence capabilities,” and he charged the Board to “assist the Director of Central Intelligence and the entire Intelligence Community in achieving increased effectiveness.”²⁰ With time, the Reagan Board eventually grew to 22 members (the largest in the PFIAB's history), although President Reagan issued an EO reducing the Board's size to 18 in 1985.²¹ During the eight years of the Reagan administration, as well as the first year of the Bush administration, the PFIAB was exceptionally active, and its work led to numerous significant changes and enhancements in the IC. (b)(3)(n)

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Another important study was the investigation of the defection of CIA officer Edward Lee Howard. Directed by the President, the PFIAB investigation of this major security breach led to significant changes in CIA hiring, screening, and training practices and to improvements in CIA-FBI liaison, particularly on personnel security issues. (b)(3)(n)

In 1982, the Reagan Board also began a long period of PFIAB activism on the security of US embassies abroad. The results of the Board's efforts in this area included the reduction of foreign nationals in embassies abroad.

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The Board's recommendations on enforcement of reciprocity in US-Soviet diplomatic representation would also become official US Government policy. (b)(3)(n)

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The Bush Years

On assuming office, President Bush did not change any of President Reagan's EOs establishing the PFIAB. He also retained the Reagan Board for slightly more than the first year of his administration. Then, in early 1990, President Bush appointed his own PFIAB. The Bush PFIAB—although significantly smaller in size than the Reagan Board—continued the PFIAB's long tradition of contribution, in no small part due to its impressive membership, which included the just-departed Secretary of Defense and the DCI. During its tenure, the Bush Board submitted [redacted] formal reports to the President, and, with the President's personal encouragement to identify and study subjects independently, the Bush Board conducted numerous other reviews that did not result in formal reports. (b)(3)(n)

One of the most significant reports to the President during the Bush years was the 1991 report

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Advisory Board

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Bush's Board also played a pivotal role

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The Clinton Years

President Clinton issued a new EO on the PFIAB, although he made little change in the mission or structure of the PFIAB, other than the consolidation of the IOB into the PFIAB.²³ Clinton's PFIAB, despite several disruptions—particularly the death of former Chairman Les Aspin—has continued the tradition of serving the President by striving to improve intelligence. Reflecting the changes on the international scene and the nature of US involvement overseas, the Clinton Board has submitted

two major reports to the President

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recommended in 1975 that the PFIAB's mandate be extended to include oversight of the CIA for improper or illegal activities, President Ford opted to create this separate body for oversight. The IOB was specifically charged with policing the intelligence agencies for any activities which violated law, EO, or Presidential Directive and with considering reports from the IC Inspectors General on illegal activities in the Community. The IOB's membership has often been drawn from the PFIAB, although it maintained a separate entity until this administration. In addition, during the Carter administration, when there was no PFIAB, the IOB continued to perform its oversight functions. (b)(3)(n)

The IOB

Unlike the PFIAB, the IOB—previously known as the President's Intelligence Oversight Board (PIOB)—is specifically charged with oversight and review of intelligence activities for any which are unlawful or contrary to EO or Presidential Directive. The IOB Report to the President on US intelligence activities in Guatemala in the 1980s and early 1990s²⁴ marked the first time any report from either the IOB or PFIAB has ever been released to the public. Under the current EO, the IOB is a standing committee of the PFIAB, composed of four of the PFIAB members designated by the chair. To maintain the objectivity of both the IOB and the PFIAB, however, the two continue to function as separate entities. (b)(3)(n)

President Ford created the IOB in 1976, after the Church and Pike Committee hearings into alleged wrongdoings by intelligence agencies.²⁵ The IOB originally was completely separate from the PFIAB. Although the Commission on CIA Activities Within the United States (the "Rockefeller Commission") had

The PFIAB's Future

As the reports in 1996 on reform of the IC demonstrate,²⁶ there is a widespread perception that US intelligence needs to be reformed and revamped. Regardless of any changes in the Community's structure, there is no doubt that the world has changed dramatically since the end of the Cold War, and the IC is adapting to those changes. The PFIAB is uniquely suited to guide and inform these reforms and changes. The Board enjoys direct access to the President and his advisers, and—unlike many of the groups advocating changes in intelligence—it has the ability to review the entire range of activities regardless of sensitivity or classification. Perhaps just as important, the PFIAB exists primarily to improve intelligence, not to denigrate or attack it. As a low-profile, nonpartisan board of outside experts, the PFIAB is devoid of the ulterior motives to attack publicly the CIA and the IC. The PFIAB's

position also makes it much less susceptible to the bureaucratic agendas and other nonobjective imperatives that often plague internal Community reform efforts.

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The Board is one of the most valuable mechanisms in the United States to ensure that intelligence continues "to enhance the security the United States and the conduct of its foreign affairs." All IC professionals should be aware in their dealings with the Board of the role of the PFIAB has in improving intelligence

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The Current PFIAB

The Honorable Thomas S. Foley is Chairman of the PFIAB. He was Speaker of the House of Representatives during the 101st, 102nd, and 103rd Congresses, and he served as a Representative from Washington state from 1965 to 1994. He is a partner in a Washington law firm.

The Honorable Warren B. Rudman serves as Vice Chairman of PFIAB. Mr. Rudman was a United States Senator for the state of New Hampshire from 1980 to 1992, and he served on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI). He is also a partner in a Washington law firm.

Gen. Lew Allen, Jr., USAF (Ret.) served as the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the Director of the National Security Agency (1973-77), and the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence for the IC. He also served as Vice President of the California Institute of Technology and Director of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. General Allen is the sole remaining

alumnus of President Bush's PFIAB. He is also a member of the IOB.

Zoe Baird is an attorney and is a Senior Research Affiliate and a Senior Visiting Scholar at Yale Law School. She formerly was Senior Vice President and General Counsel of the Aetna Life & Casualty Company, a counselor and senior staff executive of General Electric, an Associate Counsel to President Jimmy Carter, and a partner in a Washington law firm.

Richard L. Bloch is Chairman of the Board of the Columbus Realty Trust, President of Pinon Farm in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and serves on the boards of directors of several other corporations and charities.

Ann Z. Caracristi is a retired professional intelligence officer and 40-year veteran of the National Security Agency, where she served as Deputy Director from 1980 to 1982. She is also a member of the DCI/Secretary of Defense Joint Security Commission, and she chaired the DCI Task Force on intelligence training. Ms. Caracristi is a member of the IOB.

Dr. Sidney D. Drell is a professor of physics at Stanford University and is Deputy Director of the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center. He is also Adjunct Professor at Carnegie Mellon University, a Director of the Arms Control Association, and former President of the American Physical Society. Since 1960, he has advised the US Government on national-security-related scientific and technical issues.

The Honorable Thomas F. Eagleton is a retired United States Senator for Missouri, serving in the Senate from 1968 to 1987. He served on

both the SSCI and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He is a partner in a St. Louis law firm and a University Professor of Public Affairs at Washington University.

James Hamilton is an attorney and partner in a Washington law firm. He formerly served as Assistant Chief Counsel to the SSCI (1973-74) and as Chairman of the District of Columbia Bar's Legal Ethics Committee and New Rules of Professional Conduct Education Committee.

Anthony S. Harrington is an attorney and a partner in a Washington law firm. He previously served as General Counsel to the Democratic National Committee and the 1992 Clinton/Gore campaign. He is a founding Director of the Center for Democracy, and he formerly served as Assistant Dean of the Duke Law School. Mr. Harrington is Chairman of the IOB.

Dr. Robert J. Hermann was formerly a professional intelligence officer and is Senior Vice President for Science and Technology of the United Technologies Corporation. In government, Dr. Hermann served as Director of the National Reconnaissance Office (1979-1981), as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for C4I, and as a senior official of the National Security Agency.

Harold W. Pote is a businessman, and he is a founding partner in the investment firm, The Beacon Group. He is also a trustee of Drexel University. He formerly was CEO of a major regional bank, and he has been involved in business development in Russia and in real estate

investments. Mr. Pote is a member of the IOB.

Lois D. Rice is a Guest Scholar in Economic Studies at the Brookings Institution. She formerly was Senior Vice President for Government Affairs of Control Data Corporation, and Vice President of the College Board. She also serves on the boards of directors of numerous corporations.

Stanley S. Shuman is Executive Vice President, Managing Director, and member of the Executive Committee of a major New York investment banking firm. He is the longest sitting private member of the Financial Control Board of the City of New York.

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Maurice Sonnenberg is an international consultant on industrial development, trade, and finance. He is the former Chairman of the Democratic House and Senate Council and the Democratic Leadership Council, and he has served in numerous advisory positions to the US Government on foreign policy issues, including as a member of President Carter's Export Council. He is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., USN (Ret.) was Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) from 1970 to 1974. He was the youngest four-star admiral in US naval history and was the youngest CNO. He also served as Commander of US Naval Forces, Vietnam, from 1968 to 1970. He is president of a private consulting firm, and he serves on numerous boards of directors of major corporations and charitable organizations.

NOTES

1. EO 12863, 13 September 1993. (b)(3)(n)
2. Ibid.
3. EO 10656, 8 February 1956. (b)(3)(n)
4. Although PFIAB administration and budgetary matters handled by the National Security Council, the PFIAB is independent of the NSC. (b)(3)(n)
5. EO 12863, 13 September 1993. (b)(3)(n)
6. This has been the practice through much of PFIAB's history, except during the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations, when members also received a consultant's fee of \$100 per day. (b)(3)(n)
7. For example, the Bush PFIAB submitted separate reports to the President, and numerous other letters and special reviews from 1990 to 1993. (b)(3)(n)
8. EO 12863, 13 September 1993. (b)(3)(n)
9. EO 10656, 8 February 1956. (b)(3)(n)
10. Report of the Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of Government, May 1995. (b)(3)(n)
11. The Killian Award is given annually by the PFIAB to a working-level individual or group in the IC "for excellence in performance of foreign intelligence activities of particular crucial importance to the national security of the United States." Nominations for awards are solicited and accepted from the members of intelligence. (b)(3)(n)
12. EO 10938, 4 May 1961. (b)(3)(n)
13. Presidential Memorandum, "The U.S. Foreign Intelligence Effort," 1 May 1968 (U); Presidential Memorandum, "Foreign Intelligence Activities of the United States," 19 October 1965. (b)(3)(n)
14. EO 11460, 20 March 1969. (b)(3)(n)
15. Presidential Memorandum, "United States Foreign Intelligence Activities," 24 March 1969. (b)(3)(n)
16. Statement by President Nixon, 14 March 1969. (b)(3)(n)
17. Statement by President Ford, 11 March 1976. (b)(3)(n)
18. EO 11984, 4 May 1977; Statement by President Carter, 5 May 1977. (b)(3)(n)
19. EO 12331, 20 October 1981. Reagan later issued EO 12357, 28 October 1985, which fixed the membership size and term of appointment. (b)(3)(n)
20. Presidential Memorandum "United States Intelligence Activities and Foreign-Intelligence Advisory Board," 28 May 1982. (b)(3)(n)
21. EO 12537, 28 October 1985. (b)(3)(n)
22. See *Studies in Intelligence*: "The 1983 War Scare in US-Soviet Relations" (Vol. 39, No. 4). (b)(3)(n)
23. EO 12863, 13 September 1993. (b)(3)(n)
24. IOB, "Report on the Guatemala Review," 28 June 1996. (b)(3)(n)
25. EO 11905, 18 February 1976. (b)(3)(n)
26. The most notable of these include the Report of the Commission on Roles and Capabilities of the United States Intelligence Community (the "Aspin-Brown Commission"), the HSPSCI's JC21 report, and independent reports by the Twentieth Century Fund and the Council on Foreign Relations. (b)(3)(n)